DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 817 EA 007 873

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Gmelch, Walter H.; And Others |
| TITLE | RX for Professional Growth: Inservice Education. OSSC Bulletin Vol. 19, No. 5. |
| INSTITUTION | Oregon School Study Council, Eugene. |
| PUB DATE | Jan 76 |
| NOTE | 32p. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Oregon School Study Council, 124 College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403 ($1.50, quantity discounts) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage |
| DESCRIPTORS | Administrative Personnel; *Administrator Education; Clinical Experience; Elementary Secondary Education; *Guidelines; *Inservice Education; *Inservice Programs; Professional Training; Program Descriptions; *Program Development; Program Planning |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Oregon |

ABSTRACT

This booklet examines the topic of inservice training for educational administrators and is intended to aid school district personnel interested in developing and implementing such programs. Besides discussing the inservice training opportunities currently available for Oregon school administrators, the authors also provide general guidelines for planning, implementing, and evaluating inservice efforts. Although the booklet was prepared specifically for administrators in the state of Oregon, most of its content will be useful to educators from other states as well. (JG)

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# OSSC BULLETIN

## R FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: INSERVICE EDUCATION

by

**Walter H. Gmelch**
**Robert L. Rose**
**Kenneth A. Erickson**

**Oregon School Study Council**
**Vol. 19, No. 5**
**January 1976**

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Individual copy - $1.50

(Quantity price available on request)

## FOREWORD

"$R_x$ for Professional Growth: Inservice Education" examines the issue of inservice training for administrators. Inservice options for Oregon administrators are listed and discussed, and general guidelines for planning, implementing and evaluating inservice efforts are given.

The guide for planning inservice programs should prove helpful to district personnel charged with implementing such programs.

Walt Gmelch, assistant director of the Field Training and Service Bureau at the University of Oregon, directs the Externship Program and is involved in other inservice programs for administrators in the state. Robert L. (Ozzie) Rose, Executive Secretary of COSA (Confederation of Oregon School Administrators), is involved in helping to provide inservice education for Oregon administrators. Ken Erickson, director of the Field Training and Service Bureau, continues to work for increased professional growth opportunities for administrators.

Gail Fullington
Assistant Executive Secretary
Oregon School Study Council

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## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, most inservice education opportunities have been planned for teachers. Until recently, little has been done for inservice training of school administrators. The current need for administrator inservice programs has been amplified by critical problems for which traditional formal training has not prepared the school administrator. Some challenges facing today's school administrator which were little known in the early 1960's include teacher militancy, student militancy, program budgeting, professional negotiations, teacher strikes, court orders regarding integration, minority studies, performance contracting, differentiated staffing, and accountability.

This Bulletin seeks to clarify several features of inservice education for public school administrators. While not comprehensive in its coverage, the responses to the following basic questions should provide the reader with a sense of direction and purpose:

1. What is inservice education?
2. Why is inservice education needed for administrators?
3. How can inservice education be created to provide meaningful opportunities for educational leaders?
4. Who currently provides inservice programs for educational administrators?

## WHAT IS INSERVICE EDUCATION?

Inservice education should be a familiar term to today's educators. The term suggests a meaning which encompasses all of the organized activities, methods, and means designed to promote individual growth and development.[1] Assuming administrators are employed with a certain level of proficiency in educational administration, the inservice thrust begins by promoting on-the-job growth and development from that level.

The American Association of School Administrators sees the focal point in the organization and operation of inservice programs as "bringing about changes in people."[2] This suggests that if individuals are to change they must develop a readiness to improve their competencies and a receptiveness to participate in professional growth and development opportunities. Before either of these prerequisites of change can occur, administrators need an answer to the next basic question: "Why inservice education?"

## WHY INSERVICE EDUCATION?

In spite of the fact that the primary task of all educators is to train individuals, most school systems neglect the training of their own personnel.[3] Precedents in other organizations lead us to realize that inservice training in the field of education generally is inadequate. By contrast, medical centers throughout the United States offer post-

graduate training programs for practicing physicians ranging from several days to a month in length. The American Academy of General Practice requires postgraduate training each year if a doctor is to retain his membership in that organization. Most people would object to placing their health in the hands of a doctor who had not been back to school for 10 to 20 years. Yet, generally speaking, school systems are little concerned about placing the mental welfare of the nation's children in the hands of educators who do not regularly add to their efficiency through some form of continuing education.

Today's need for continuing inservice education for school administrators is self-evident. Several recurring themes supporting the need for inservice education have been identified in the literature.

Changing times. As society changes there is a compelling need for our monolithic education structure to change. These societal changes create a condition where current educational practices and knowledge become obsolete or ineffective in a short period of time. Yet the schools cannot change in ways that really matter unless educators themselves change. As a result, if the premise is valid that schools must change with the changing society, then inservice education is a key to improving schools and equipping administrators to meet today's challenges.

Knowledge explosion. Closely related to the effect of change on the administration of schools is the impact the

creation of new knowledge has on administrators' ability to lead effectively. While administrators recently emerging from quality preservice programs may be knowledgeable of recent research, those who have been in the field for many years and have not been able to keep in touch with recent developments, may act as a brake rather than a throttle on effective program development.[4] Inservice education can provide interested administrators with the opportunity to keep abreast of important educational developments and practices.

Inadequate preparation. Preservice preparation of administrators is often not comprehensive or completely adequate for coping with the new challenges of education. In addition to complementing the preservice training at universities, inservice programs ideally should assist administrators in meeting the real challenges and needs of school management in the field.

Administrator renewal. The well-known Kettering Foundation takes the following position on the renewal of administrators: "A school district, to perpetuate sound leadership and determine its future, must provide the means whereby each of its administrators can participate in a process of renewal. It is not enough merely to assume that each individual through his/her own initiative will be able to accomplish this."[5]

Seen in a more imaginative light, Raymond posits the career of an administrator as analogous to the operating life

of a car.[6] The novice administrator emerging from the university resembles a stripped-down car with a small engine and a few basic accessories. However, upon entering the world of practical problems, the administrator faces the challenges of some pretty rough roads and heavy traffic. Throughout the journey ahead, the administrator may need to go back into the shop periodically to get extra "torque" for climbing steep hills, an air conditioner for hot spots, an enlarged rear view mirror for continuous feedback, fog lights for guidance through hazardous conditions, and an occasional tune-up for smooth and efficient running. The inservice education shop should be able to install some of the optional extras, to perform tune-ups every 1,000 hours, and occasionally to "add a little basic equipment the manufacturer forgot to install." Therefore, in much the same way a car gets outmoded and needs some repair, an administrator should have tune-up opportunities for his skills and competencies.

Retention of competent administrators. Recruitment of "top-notch" administrators is a necessary precursor to effective management. If an organization is successful in attracting and selecting competent educational leaders, it should be equally interested in the retention of such personnel. Inservice education has long been heralded by both private and public management experts as the "key" to retaining effective and efficient management.

Organizational stagnation. While inservice education helps to retain competent employees, it also protects an organization against stagnation. Whereas decreasing turnover among administrators tends to reduce the infusion of new ideas brought in by new staff members,[7] inservice programs serve as a pipeline in the generation of innovative and vital ideas.

Inservice as an investment. Industry, business and government agencies recognize employee inservice education as a management obligation. American corporations, for instance, allocate approximately ten times the amount of resources to inservice than does education.[8] Even among the educational institutions which allocate resources for personnel development, when the budget gets tight inservice funds all too often are viewed as dispensable. Therefore, in educational organizations where eighty percent of the schools' operating budget is expended on personnel resources, it makes good management sense to invest in inservice education. Thus, "effective performance in current assignments will be increased and talents for promotion to greater responsibilities will be detected and developed."[9]

Although the themes outlined above provide strong evidence supporting the need for growth and development opportunities, inservice education per se is not a panacea. As with all other cultural tools it can be effective or ineffective in achieving its goals, depending upon a variety

of factors. Some factors impairing the effective presentation of inservice programs include:

1. Credit--It is difficult to design inservice programs which offer college credit because inservice usually is offered away from campus and does not meet a predetermined number of hours. Educators are accustomed to receiving a certain number hours of credit for additional college training, which they may be able to apply to a pay scale in their district. Thus, they tend to expect credit for most inservice activities and may avoid committing themselves to programs which do not offer credit. If continuous education is to be part of the growth of professional educators, new ways may need to be found to relate these activities to the granting of credit.
2. Certification--Today there is much concern about competency-based certification in all areas of education, especially in certifying administrators. If competency means the ability to function adequately in the position, inservice training is a logical and flexible vehicle for the completion of certification requirements.
3. Board posture--School boards traditionally have not allocated any sizable amounts of money for inservice training. This is unfortunate since public schools are a labor intensive industry. If a school board

fails to appropriate maintenance and improvement dollars for the continuing education of its staff, it guarantees rapid obsolescence of the school's most important and expensive asset--its educators.

Boards of education must give stronger support to efficient inservice training. Training individuals while on the job demands both time and ample funds. Finding such resources is the responsibility of the employing organization. Local boards must realize that appropriate inservice activity will be beneficial to educators and therefore to the children served.

4. Consultant mystique--There is a pervasive mystique that suggests that a local consultant may be less effective than one who comes from a great distance. Many capable consultants who work outside their own state are seldom requested to work in their own area or region. Efforts should be made to identify and use local talent.

5. Overloading--If administrators are expected to participate in training programs at the end of a busy day or week, they'll inevitably suffer from work overload and not benefit fully from the training offered. It is necessary that school districts look upon inservice training as important for improving education programs for children and therefore worthy

of adequate allocations of time.

6. Inappropriate activities--Inservice education suffers if it consists primarily of speeches and long periods of sitting and listening for participants. Learning experiences must be selected which require active involvement of participants. In planning such activities, genuine consideration of staff wishes should be sought. The planning of inservice programs by only the superintendent, school board or principal may produce irrelevant programs with minimal staff acceptability.
7. Results of training--One of the major stumbling blocks to the continuation of inservice education is the demand for immediate results. Inservice Education for School Administration (AASA, 1963) says in this regard that change is "imperceptible at the time of its making, yet it becomes part of total growth . . . " Results are evident, not necessarily at the time of inservice activities, but as inservice participants put what they have learned to work in actual situations.
8. Evaluations--Rarely are careful evaluations of programs undertaken--either while the program is in progress or at its termination. Evaluation is essential if it is to be determined how well the participants' needs are being met.

9. Attitudes--One of the quickest ways to create disinterest in some activities is to announce that they will be part of an inservice program. This disinterest has not been wholly undeserved, as many irrelevant programs have been forced upon professional educators under the guise of inservice education. Only by carrying out meaningful and dynamic inservice programs will this negative image be erased.

Given the present constraining factors, how can inservice education be created to provide meaningful growth and development opportunities for educational leaders?

## HOW IS MEANINGFUL INSERVICE EDUCATION DEVELOPED?

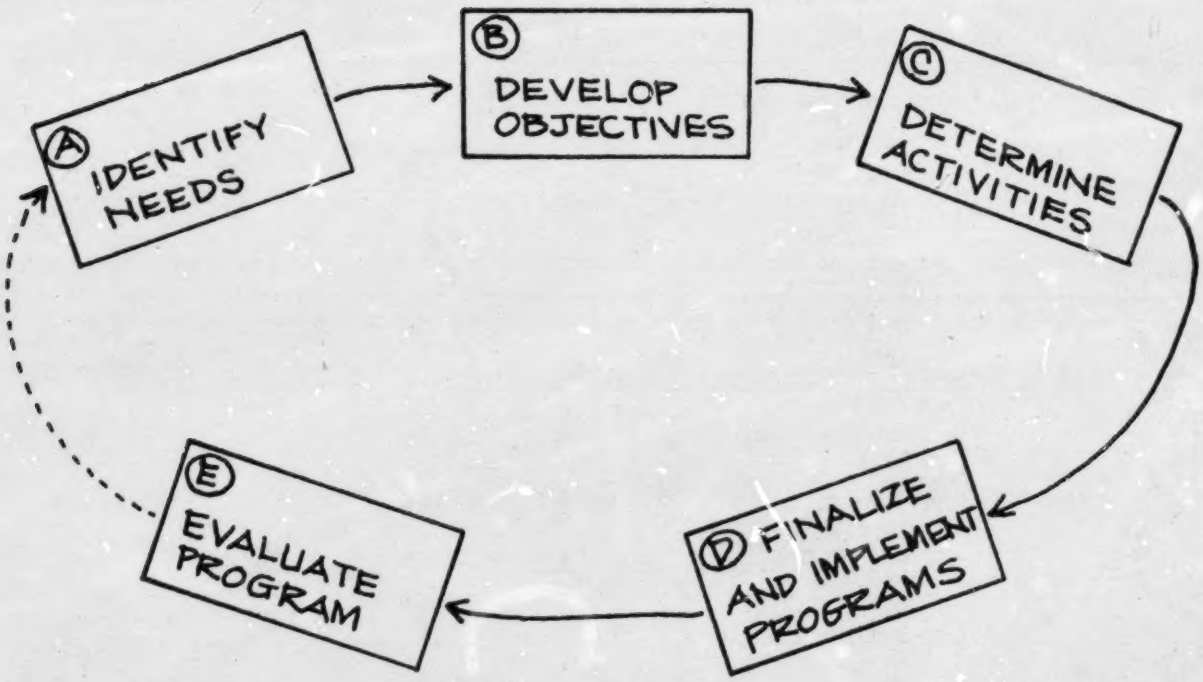
The development of a successful inservice program many times is contingent upon the involvement of participants in the planning. A close relationship exists between involvement in an enterprise and the commitment to its goal. Yet inservice participants all too often are never involved in selecting, planning and executing their own inservice education activities.

The plan for the development of inservice programs presented in Figure 1 presupposes the involvement of participants throughout the process. Risking oversimplification, the plan itself includes five basic components which

outline a cyclical process for program development. Each component or stage is subsequently elaborated upon.

Figure 1

Inservice Program Development



A. Identify Needs

Fundamental to the success of any inservice program is the systematic assessment of participant needs prior to program planning. The first task, therefore, in the development of inservice programs is the identification of needs. The most common practice is to survey potential inservice clients for their perception of training needs. Mesa School District in Arizona employs an elaborate system whereby it goes beyond the measurement of participants' "perceived" needs and investigates need areas by the following means:

1) job definitions often outline specific tasks administrators are responsible for performing, which in themselves provide potential training needs;

2) measured needs are more objective than perceived needs and less dependent upon the participant's understanding of his/her job and willingness to report weaknesses;

3) observed needs measured by unobtrusive means can be less threatening than formalized testing procedures; and

4) review of current literature and programs enhances the chance of keeping educators up with recent developments and knowledge breakthroughs.[10]

Needs assessment systems do not have to be elaborate to be effective. However, consideration should be given to alternative processes of generating information since the development of relevant programs is dependent upon the accuracy of the information on which it is based.

B. Develop Objectives

Pertinent objectives for inservice programs should be carefully drafted from the results of the needs analysis and clearly and explicitly stated. It is often too easy to be content with general notions of program objectives. "If you're not sure where you're going, you're liable to end up someplace else."[11]

Clearly stated objectives are also crucial to the successful execution of subsequent stages of program development. First, the determination of program activities must be related to the objectives of the program. Just as a repairman does not select tools before the job has been specified, one cannot determine activities for inservice programs without a sound basis to select materials and instructional methods.

Second, assessment of inservice performance should be conducted according to the objectives originally stated. When objectives are inadequately defined, the task of evaluating the effectiveness of programs becomes more difficult.

Third, although not directly related to any specific stage in the program development process, participants' prior knowledge of objectives can provide them with a clear sense of the program's direction and purpose.

In sum, the determination of objectives is an integral component in the process of program development which

influences the successful completion of subsequent stages in the development cycle.

C. Determine Activities

Inservice activities should be designed to specifically fulfill the previously established program objectives. Activities such as small group discussion, role playing, case studies, panels, discussion, and lecturettes in addition to video and audio equipment can be used to efficiently and creatively present various kinds of subject matter.

Selection of appropriate consultants for inservice activities is also an important consideration. To cut down on unnecessary expenses, greater use should be made of qualified professional staff members within the immediate region, state and/or within the school system. By utilizing local resource persons one increases the potential for follow-up sessions which is not possible when an outside consultant "blows in, blows off, and blows out." In short, only in situations where needed services are not available in the district or in the general area should consultants from a distance be utilized.

Finally, inservice programs can and should place a great deal more emphasis on doing rather than listening. A study on inservice activities found that the most successful learning methods were ones which actively involved the participants.[12] For instance, role playing and small group

discussions are activities which increase the participation, interest and morale of inservice educators. This is not to say that all activities should be participative, but rather that administrators should become involved in meaningful exercises after general principles have been established.

D. Finalize and Implement Programs

The inservice program itself is primarily a function of the predetermined activities, though the role of needs and objectives cannot be ignored. A research summary by the National Education Association outlines types of inservice programs presently being implemented:

1. Classes and courses.
2. Institutes (a series of lectures designed to give as much information as possible in a short time, usually two or three days).
3. Conferences (gives particpants an opportunity to question others and discuss ideas presented).
4. Workshops (usually a moderate-sized group where each person has a problem to solve that is closely related to his field). A skilled consultant works with each group.
5. Staff meetings (may perform a useful inservice function but generally used to acquaint teachers with administrative procedures and policies).
6. Committee work (five to seven members work on a problem that would be impossible for the whole school staff to tackle).
7. Professional reading (with the aid of professional library, study groups, book reviews, etc.).
8. Individual conferences (dependent on feelings of mutual understanding and support existing between teacher and supervisor).

9. Visits and demonstrations (opportunity to observe actual teaching techniques).

10. Work experience (usually in lines related to teaching fields).

11. Teacher exchanges.

12. Cultural experiences (travel, lectures, concerts, plays, operas).[13]

These above major types fall into two kinds of inservice programs. The short-term, one-shot program involves workshops or seminars concentrating on a particular topic for a short time (one day to several days). This kind of program is most appropriate when the purpose is to develop an awareness of new concepts, to provide information which may be used by the participants in their job assignments, or to serve a large number of individuals in a short length of time.

A second major kind of inservice involves long-range concentrated effort, often within some organization like a school district. Such an effort may be planned over a long time (from several weeks to a year or more). The goal is to cause a change in behavior of individuals within the organization or in its environment. Sending an individual away to a workshop the goal of which is to cause change within an organization may be relatively ineffective. In such cases an individual often returns highly motivated and enthusiastic about his experience only to find it very difficult to effect a change in the working environment.

## E. Evaluate Program Results

Evaluation provides the necessary feedback upon which decisions for continuation, termination or modification of inservice programs are made. Therefore, all continuing education programs should be evaluated. The evaluation criteria should be developed simultaneously with establishment of program needs, objectives and activities. In sum, it should be an integral part of program development from beginning to end.

In order to assess the impact of inservice programs, evaluations can be carried out at different times as well as collected by use of a variety of available instruments. The actual assessment can take place during, immediately after, and/or several months past the session to determine the practical value of the inservice program. Any one of a number of techniques or instruments may be used, such as formal questionnaires soliciting participant reactions, on-the-job performance tests, or pre- and post-comparisons of competencies and skills. The important point to remember is that programs should be justified by some means of systematic and internally valid evaluation results.

The evaluation stage completes the cycle of inservice program development. However, such a planning model should not be considered static. The linkage between evaluation and the primary stages of program development is vital to the regeneration of effective inservice education.

The present section on how to develop inservice programs was based on the premise that participants should be involved in the planning of programs. With respect to participatory planning, the American Association of School Administrators adds that the responsibility for planning any inservice program should be shared by those who receive the service and those who provide it.[14]

## WHO PROVIDES INSERVICE EDUCATION?

### Local School Districts

The most logical source of inservice education is at the local school district level. Some of the larger districts possess the financial and personnel resources to conduct effective staff development programs. The local district is in a position to entice participation of administrators through promotional and professional incentives. The degree to which programs are implemented, however, is usually a function of the chief administrative officer's commitment to inservice education and of the district's technical and financial ability.

### State Departments of Education

While reference to growth and development opportunities is usually directed toward the local school district, many outstanding opportunities for professional growth exist

outside the local districts. State departments of education (SDE) provide worthwhile opportunities for public school administrators. They usually perform a primary function in familiarizing administrators with new laws and regulations through various forms of inservice programs. However, SDE's often are plagued with resource problems such that they can seldom allocate massive resources to inservice efforts.

Professional Associations

Professional associations can be looked to for providing numerous inservice programs. Notable among recent efforts to meet the inservice needs of public school administrators has been the National Academy for School Executives (NASE) begun in January, 1969 by the American Association of School Administrators. NASE conducts five-day comprehensive seminars, two-and-a-half day skill and orientation institutes, and one-day mini-institutes throughout the country on a score of topics. These programs have attracted more than 2,000 participants each year.

In 1972 the National Association of Secondary School Principals, supported by a grant from the Danforth Foundation, established the National Institute for Secondary School Administrators. NISSA was modeled after the Academy program by AASA. Presently the Secondary Principals Association not only offers National Institute programs but has expanded its opportunities by providing Frontline Conferences specifically

designed for assistant principals and administrators of smaller secondary schools.

Within the state of Oregon the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), an umbrella organization for all Oregon administrator associations, is also actively involved in the inservice education of its members. Associations such as COSA often are in a better position to react quickly to changing inservice needs than are either local districts or training institutions.

Both national and state professional organizations play instrumental roles in sponsoring growth and development programs which are in line with the needs of their constituents. Through workshops, conferences, conventions and other inservice activities they can provide the opportunity for administrators to develop leadership, broaden personal and professional contacts, encourage professionalism, and stimulate the exchange of ideas.[15]

Private Enterprise

Outstanding examples of continuing education programs, many of which may be adaptable to the needs of the public schools, have been designed by major industries, businesses and private consulting firms. Appropriate portions of such programs should be evaluated for possible incorporation into educational inservice programs.

Institutions of Higher Education

Universities and colleges, too, recognize the need for providing follow-up services to administrators on the job. The University of Oregon, for example, has designated faculty and support services in the College of Education to develop inservice education. During the past five years the College of Education through the Field Training and Service Bureau has made numerous inservice opportunities available to Oregon educators. Some of these programs vary from traditional inservice activities provided by institutions of higher education. A few such programs include:

A. The Externship in Educational Administration: The Externship is a year-long experience for practicing administrators. It involves statewide and regional meetings scheduled monthly during the school year. Participating Externs identify topics of concern to them and the Bureau develops the agenda and staffs the monthly program to cover these topics. Participants receive University credit toward their administrative certification. The program is currently in its fifth year of existence and has been judged very valuable by participants for two major reasons:

   1. Qualified and capable consultants deal with the current problems facing participants.
   2. There is the opportunity for Externs to share their operational problems with consultants and peers while engaged in on-the-job administrative assignments.

B. Oregon School Study Council Conferences and Visitations: On a quarterly basis, the Field Training and Service Bureau, acting in behalf of the Oregon School Study Council, plans conferences and visitations to exemplary school plants and programs for members of the Study Council.

C. Growth and Development Programs for Educational Leaders: The Bureau utilizes consultants from its nation-wide resource file of experts from business, industry, public schools, and institutions of higher education to help plan, coordinate and deliver professional growth programs tailored to the needs expressed by superintendents, district administrators, building principals, supervisors, teachers, and school board members. Such programs have helped educators meet the increasing challenges confronting educational leaders today.

D. Teacher Evaluation Workshops: Workshops have been set up for single districts or groups of districts to assist principals with teacher evaluation techniques. Two unique features have contributed highly to the workshops' success and acceptance:

1. Each workshop has been staffed by a college instructor and by a competent practicing school administrator. This combination helps to establish credibility with the workshop participants.

2. Workshops have been scheduled throughout the school year so that instruction related to specific evaluation skills is provided at the times most needed by participants.

E. Communication and Organizational Development Programs: Two workshops designed to improve an administrative team's function have been carried out under the direction of the Field Training and Service Bureau. Both of these workshops use organizational development tools developed in the private sector and adapted to the public school administrative team.

Because of the resources available to institutions of higher education, colleges and universities are in a position to contribute to the continuous training needs of their graduate educators. Thus a direct tie can be made between the problems of the professional educator and the activities of college staff conducting inservice training. This two-way communication is beneficial and essential to both parties.

Inservice education is being performed by a variety of agencies, institutions, and organizations: local school districts, state departments of education, professional associations, private enterprises, and institutions of higher education. Even though inservice education has many advocates and producers, organizations typically plan and implement inservice activities independent of each other. Rather than coordinating efforts and resources, growth and development opportunities have grown to be "islands" of inservice activities.

If all the separate energies presently being expended were channeled into a coordinated network of cooperative planning, inservice education may realize an immediate synergistic expansion. This is not to say that all in-service programs should be implemented cooperatively, but that just the formation of a consortium of inservice institutions, agencies and organizations would reduce duplication of services and increase the potential for well-planned effective growth and development opportunities for public school administrators.

## SUMMARY

Inservice education is most effective when it is simple and flexible; when planning is jointly shared by those who receive and provide the service; when the program meets the needs of the local community being served; when the leadership personnel are capable of inspiring, refreshing and strengthening the learners; when enough funds are available to implement potentially successful programs; and when the inservice program stands up well under the rigid test of usefulness. The ultimate test of usefulness is the extent to which it has brought about better schools--richer and more varied opportunities for children to learn and grow, stronger and better prepared teachers, more flexible school facilities, and improvement at every point along the way

toward achievement of the educational program that is presently wanted and needed.[16]

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